

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

DATE: February 7, 2008

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 5:53 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDING MEMBERS

Benjamin Hunter, Chairman
Ginny Cain
Dane Mahern
Angela Mansfield
Janice McHenry
Mary Moriarty Adams
Cherrish Pryor
Christine Scales
Mike Speedy

ABSENT MEMBERS

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 35, 2008 - approves the Mayor's appointment of David Sherman as the Director of the Department of Public Works

"Do Pass"

Vote 9-0

PROPOSAL NO. 37, 2008 - appoints Gary W. Whitmore to the Board of Public Works

"Do Pass"

Vote 9-0

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

The Public Works Committee of the City-County Council met on Thursday, February 7, 2008. Chair Benjamin Hunter called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present: Ginny Cain, Dane Mahern, Angela Mansfield, Janice McHenry, Mary Moriarty Adams, Cherrish Pryor, and Christine Scales. Mike Speedy arrived shortly thereafter.

Chair Hunter asked that each Committee member introduce themselves. Councillor Pryor said that she represents District 7, which covers parts of Pike and Wayne Townships. Councillor Mahern said that he represents District 19, which is located on the southwest side of downtown. Councillor Mansfield said that she represents District 2, which covers parts of Pike and Washington Townships, and Councillor Moriarty Adams said that she represents the wonderful east side of Indianapolis in District 17. Chair Hunter said that he also represents the wonderful east side in District 21. Councillor Cain said that she represents District 5, which covers the north side of Lawrence. Councillor McHenry said that she represents District 6, which includes portions of Pike and Wayne Townships, and Councillor Scales said that she represents District 4, on the northeast side bordered by 38th Street, Keystone Avenue, 96th Street, Binford Boulevard, and Emerson Avenue.

PROPOSAL NO. 35, 2008 - approves the Mayor's appointment of David Sherman as the Director of the Department of Public Works

Mr. Sherman said that he moved to Indianapolis after meeting Councillor Moriarty Adams about 14 years ago while looking at some projects in California. She encouraged him to move to Indianapolis, and he thanked her for that encouragement. Chair Hunter asked Mr. Sherman to briefly state his background and explain why he feels that he is best suited for the position of Director of Public Works. Mr. Sherman said that he has approximately 37 years of engineering experience, during which he has had the opportunity to build companies and transition cities throughout the United States. He added that he has done some work in Spain, Greece, and Paris. Consequently, he had the choice to build a company in Sydney, Australia or come to Indianapolis to help with the privatization in the 1990s. Mr. Sherman said that he now accepts Indianapolis as his home and does not plan to move, and he therefore wants to partake and help build the city. He said as Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW), he would like to help balance the books, ensure completion of tasks more quickly and economically, and provide more customer service. Mr. Sherman said that he was President of United Water when it first arrived in Indianapolis. In the last four years, he has been helping to build churches, helping companies buy and sell businesses, and working with widows and widowers to financially survive after the passing of their spouses. Mr. Sherman said that the Mayor called him on Christmas Eve to see if he would consider being Director of DPW, and Scott Newman, Director of Public Safety, called him as well.

Councillor Scales said that she had the opportunity to hear Mr. Sherman speak to a group of Councillors and he shared some specifics of his intentions to be more customer service oriented. She asked him to share some of those specifics. Mr. Sherman said that he currently has an open door policy for people to call in and speak directly to him about concerns. He said that his department has also been looking at how their communications people can better reach out into

the neighborhoods. He said that some neighborhoods may be able to receive faster relief from the stresses of flooding or sewage overflow. This may be done by changing where some of the capital improvement projects are being done and without requiring more money to complete the tasks. Mr. Sherman stated that he also believes that it is important for everyone to understand the costs of operations, such as emergency repairs versus scheduled repairs, and to be informed on standard processes. For example, he was at a neighborhood meeting and someone asked if the snow will be removed from all of the side streets, and he answered that the answer depends on the time of snow fall. He said that, in his opinion, repairing potholes and street resurfacing should be made a priority. He also plans to have a crew working toward making downtown more accessible.

Councillor Cain said that re-paving projects have been limited to thoroughfares across the county for the past three years, and there are many neighborhoods that are concerned and need services. She asked if another funding mechanism outside of taxes that may be available to help with this effort. Mr. Sherman answered that he is open to all ideas and is very willing to work with the Councillors. He said that he has asked a specialty team to bring out some of the ideas that have worked in the past, but are no longer being used. Additionally, he said that he wants to look at some of the capital improvement money that is available and possibly refocus it to cover some of those areas, because some of the resurfacing may prevent DPW from having to react to the pothole problem. Mr. Sherman said that he wants to turn DPW from being a reactionary agency to being a more planned and methodical agency. He said that he would like to have Engineering be more involved with Operations, and he is going to try to build the Engineering group to a point of actually performing more engineering-type work. He said that this effort will also appeal to Engineering graduates, as Indianapolis has some great projects to be done, but they are being managed instead.

Councillor Moriarty Adams commented that she met Mr. Sherman during the privatization of the Wastewater Treatment Facility. She said that she went to Los Angeles to look at their sewers and their Wastewater facility and it was a wonderful project. At the time, Mr. Sherman was associated with the White River Environmental Partnership. Since that time, Indianapolis has privatized its Wastewater Treatment Facility, which is well operated by United Water. Councillor Moriarty Adams said that she is very pleased about the appointment of Mr. Sherman, as he does an exceptional job.

Councillor Mansfield commented that her district is lacking sidewalks, and she has a number of people whose transportation consists of the need for sidewalks. She said that people often walk along side roads, including women with strollers, and she would like to see advancement in an effort to provide sidewalks in her district. Mr. Sherman said that he likes to get out into the communities to see where improvements can be made, and he hopes that he will be able to spend time with each of the Councillors to look at some things that need to be done. He said that he wants to ensure that tasks are being completed at the best cost and the best quality, but he is sure that everyone understands that funding is sometimes an issue. He said that it will be helpful to have a board that works with DPW to explain the issues during the learning process.

[Clerk's note: Councillor Speedy arrived at 5:43 p.m.]

Councillor Mahern said that one of the problems that DPW has faced for the past three years is budgeting for fuel, and the department has to return every year to request more money. He asked how Mr. Sherman will look at budgeting a more accurate amount for next year's budget and what steps he will take to continue the process for obtaining more environmentally friendly and fuel efficient vehicles, as well as improving fuel efficiency and environmental controls. Mr. Sherman answered that his mission is to have a "true" budget, which involves understanding the actual costs of operations. He said that DPW is looking at some opportunities for fuel efficiency, including some possible additives with the establishment of Lucas Oil. He said that DPW will perform a study, and he expects results in about three weeks, because they need to know how to be more efficient. He said that he believes that he has approximately 600 vehicles that have over 125,000 miles; 91 snow plows of which 30 percent are 1995 vehicles and 29 percent are 1997 vehicles and all are rusting. The same issues exist with the trash trucks; and the Hot Boxes are about five years past their life cycle. He stated that in looking at the issues, he feels that it is time for DPW to serve the City by equipping his employees to do so. He said that he is confident that his efforts will be successful by 2009, and he will be able to petition the Mayor for employee pay raises.

Councillor McHenry asked if there are any grants that can be requested to help with streets, sidewalks, etc. Mr. Sherman answered in the affirmative, and stated that some of the DPW staff has been looking at possible grants and possibly solicitation of some of the local companies for additional contributions. He said, interestingly, there is a \$10 billion Green Print project grant of which the City should be trying to get a portion. This would also help with buildings, streets, and other projects. Mr. Sherman said that he will provide a list of possible grants to the Committee.

Councillor Moriarty Adams moved, seconded by Councillor Mansfield, to forward Proposal No. 35, 2008 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 9-0.

PROPOSAL NO. 37, 2008 - appoints Gary W. Whitmore to the Board of Public Works

Mr. Whitmore said that he has been an east side resident for 52 years, and he and his wife have economically raised three children. They still live in the same house and own two cars that are over ten years old. Therefore, he knows a little about saving money. He said that he became interested in serving the City of Indianapolis over a year ago and feels that he has a lot to offer because of his background. He is currently a truck driver, but also has experience in sales, customer service and machinery design. He has participated in developing proposals for government operations bids seeking to sell things to the government, and he therefore realizes how vendors sometimes slant things to favor their services. His basic idea is to serve the City and help improve operations and save money. Chair Hunter said that he is proud to offer recommendation of Mr. Whitmore, as he has known him for quite a while and knows that Mr. Whitmore is a dedicated resident of the east side.

Councillor Moriarty Adams moved, seconded by Councillor Speedy, to forward Proposal No. 37, 2008 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 9-0.

Other Business

Chair Hunter stated that the Public Works Committee meetings were originally on the calendar for 5:00 p.m., but some of the members have declared that 5:30 p.m. is more conducive to their schedules. He asked the Committee if there is a preference for the time. The Committee unanimously agreed that 5:30 p.m. is better for all. Councillor Mansfield added that she has been asking that most of the committee meetings begin at 5:30 p.m., because it recognizes that the Council is a part-time legislative body and that many of the Councillors have full-time jobs. She also stated that another concern is that the meetings are open to the public, and having the meetings begin at 5:00 p.m. creates a hindrance for the public to attend without having to take off work. Chair Hunter agreed, and asked the Council Office to modify the calendar to reflect the change in time.

Conclusion

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Public Works Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Benjamin Hunter, Chair

BH/nsm